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Tribute to Admiral Mike Mullen

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Students enjoyed guided tours of the campus on Thursday and Friday, and were presented with facts and demonstrations about the programs available at the Pineville Campus.

"We are delighted to be able to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary on the Pineville Campus and we are equally delighted to have so many folks visit us," said Dr. W. Bruce Ayers, President of SKCTC. "This campus has meant so much to the area and so much to the college for a number of years."

The southeast division of the University of Kentucky was launched in 1960, and has been an important facet of the Bell County community since the birth of the Pineville and Middlesboro branches of the college.

At the open house, Dr. Ayers shared some of the history of the institution. The Pineville campus, he explained, joined the SKCTC family in 1998, but had been in the area for some time.

"This particular campus actually began as an LPN nursing school down in Pineville, and moved here after they were flooded out in the 1970s. They moved up here, got a new building and expanded the curriculum. They've been doing a splendid job here in allied health since that time," said Dr. Ayers.

Although the building situated on Log Mountain is relatively small compared with many other campuses, it is able to house a number of programs in the medical field. Each year, students begin programs in Respiratory Therapy, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology, Clinical Lab Technology, or enroll in a nursing program to become a Licensed Practical Nurse or Registered Nurse.

The Pineville campus is a vital part of the SKCTC family, serving as a main location for many medical programs.

"We train probably about 50 percent of our allied health students for the entire college here," remarked Dr. Ayers of SKCTC Pineville.

The majority of those students leave the school with a medical license. Ayers reported that the campus boasts "remarkably high pass rates" on licensing exams, and that several programs maintain a pass rate of 100 percent.

Those numbers serve as proof, he says, that students in the area are as bright and capable of success as students anywhere in the country.

SKCTC's anniversary was celebrated in Middlesboro in December.

REPEAL OF DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell law. Today marks the end of the 60-day waiting period following notification to Congress that the necessary certifications were made by the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding this change in policy. I am pleased that this discriminatory law was relegated to the past early this morning at midnight.

I am proud to have played a role in this repeal, and I thank my colleague Senator LIEBERMAN who, when prospects seemed most dire, worked with me to develop a strategy to pass a stand-alone version of the bill that ultimately resulted in repeal of DADT.

It was almost 4 years ago when I first asked ADM Michael Mullen, then

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, about the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. That was the first, but not the last, time that Admiral Mullen courageously testified in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee about the need to debate and evaluate the DADT policy.

It seemed to me then—as it does now—that our Nation should not refuse the service of patriots who willingly answer the call to arms, simply on the basis of their sexual orientation. If individuals are willing to put on the uniform of our country, to be deployed in war zones like Iraq and Afghanistan, to risk their lives for the benefit of their fellow citizens, then we should be expressing our gratitude to them, not trying to exclude them from serving or expelling them from the military.

Since 1993, more than 13,000 men and women have been dismissed from service and countless more have been barred from serving. Society has changed a great deal in the last 18 years since President Clinton signed the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law, and I am proud Congress took the lead to repeal the law.

I thank the LGBT community for their outreach and support of this effort. I especially was honored by the number of servicemembers both active duty and retired who have thanked me for this effort, or who have shared their personal story of how the law was affecting their lives. I recently received one of those stories on a postcard with a stamp from overseas that was signed "An Army Soldier." I would like to have his message printed in the RECORD because his words represent the sentiment of so many other brave men and women of our fighting forces.

His postcard says this:

Dear Senator Collins, I will still be deployed in Afghanistan on 20 September when [Don't Ask, Don't Tell] is finally repealed. It will take a huge burden off my shoulders—a combat zone is stressful enough on its own . . . I will repay your courage with continued professionalism.

With a spirit of service such as this, is there any doubt we should be welcoming this warrior into our military? I want to thank this anonymous soldier for taking the time to share this important message with me and with my colleagues. Because of soldiers like him, our country remains strong and our military united in a common cause with the freedom of individual expression guaranteed by the liberties they fight to preserve.

TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Mike Mullen who is retiring as the 17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff after more than 43 years of distinguished service to our country.

Admiral Mullen began his rise in the Navy as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, where he became a

proud graduate in 1968. Upon graduation, then Ensign Mullen reported aboard the USS Collett, deploying to the Western Pacific and participating in combat operations off the coast of Vietnam. Eventually, his career at sea would include serving aboard six other warships, including command of three, as well as command of the George Washington Carrier Strike Group and U.S. Second Fleet.

He supplemented his systems engineering degree from Annapolis with a master of science degree in operations research from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA, and a business degree from the advanced management program at Harvard.

Ashore, he similarly distinguished himself with tours at the U.S. Naval Academy, the Bureau of Naval Personnel, the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations as well as in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

With an already exemplary career of service at sea and ashore, Admiral Mullen became the Navy's 32nd Vice Chief of Naval Operations in 2003. During the first half of 2005, he served as Commander of NATO's Joint Force Command Naples and Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, leading the Alliance's peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and its critical training mission in Iraq.

In July of 2005, he became the top uniformed leader in the Navy as the 28th Chief of Naval Operations. With the Nation fighting two wars, he oversaw the service's efforts to man, train, and equip our Navy to fulfill its traditional missions at sea. Facing innovative and nontraditional enemies, Admiral Mullen conceived and championed the Navy's vital contribution to the fight on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dedicated to keeping the sea lanes free, deterring aggression, and maintaining our Nation's maritime superiority, he also led efforts to stabilize the Navy's shipbuilding program to support a 313-ship fleet.

On October 1, 2007, Admiral Mullen assumed duties as the 17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Facing a myriad of challenges, and with ongoing conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan, he worked tirelessly with our Nation's leadership to oversee multiple, sustained joint military operations. Admiral Mullen's efforts played a vital role in disrupting terrorist networks, providing humanitarian assistance at home and abroad, and improving the security and stability in Iraq.

Recognizing the danger of an Allied failure in Afghanistan, he became an early and vocal proponent of resourcing the war by expanding counterinsurgency capabilities and fostering closer ties with strategically vital Pakistan.

Never forgetting that those who return from war often continue to bear scars—both seen and unseen—Admiral Mullen and his wife Deborah passionately represented the interests of the

men and women returning from the battlefield. He initiated an unprecedented nationwide dialogue to advance awareness and support for the many issues facing our warriors, veterans, and their families.

Many have recognized Admiral Mullen's dedication to service with a wide range of awards and decorations. But I know first hand that his truest reward is the satisfaction he must feel for a lifetime of service to a country he so deeply loves. Admiral Mullen's commitment to the Americans who have given so much will endure well beyond his days in uniform.

I will add that Admiral Mullen's legacy will continue in another way after retirement. He and Deborah continue to proudly support their sons, John and Michael, as they pursue their own uniformed service in support of the world's greatest Navy.

The U.S. Navy and our military will never forget the service of Mike Mullen, one of its most respected and valued leaders, who took the helm during a dynamic and uncertain time in our Nation's history. And none of us will ever forget how he led—with humility, a selfless devotion to others, and integrity.

Please join me in recognizing and commending ADM Mike Mullen for a lifetime of service to his country and to wish him the best in his retirement. May God bless Mike and Deborah, and their family, for all they have given and continue to give our country. We remain in their debt.

TRIBUTE TO BILL ENGEMAN

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Cincinnati resident Bill Engeman, who has made countless contributions to the sport of rowing over the past 30 years. Bill will be leaving Cincinnati later this year for Lancaster, OH, and I would like to thank Bill for his years of selfless efforts to encourage the sport of rowing.

Since the early 1980s, Bill has been a leader in advancing rowing in southwest Ohio. In the fall of 1981, Bill helped found the University of Cincinnati Rowing Team. Bill also has helped develop many rowing programs and build many boathouses at East Fork State Park and along the Ohio River. He also worked to bring the Men's and Women's National Collegiate championship to the region multiple times in the 1980s and 1990s. Bill was inducted into the National Rowing Hall of Fame in 1998.

In 2008, I had the opportunity to work with Bill to construct the Matt Maupin Memorial Pavilion at East Fork State Park, named in honor of a local high school rower and brave soldier who was killed in the line of duty in Iraq. Over the last 3 years Bill has worked to help rebuild the national rowing program in Iraq and assist in its journey to qualify young athletes for the London Olympics in 2012. This latest project is having a global impact and illustrates his

commitment to rowing and the youth of the world.

Bill Engeman has given tremendously to the Cincinnati area and the sport of rowing over the years, and thousands of area residents have benefited from his legacy. Bill will be honored for his efforts on Tuesday, September 27, 2011. I would like to join with his many friends in congratulating Bill and thanking him for all he has done. While he may be moving to another city, he will always be considered the father of rowing in Cincinnati.

REMEMBERING HENRY SMITH, JR.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Mr. Henry Smith, Jr. The people of Louisiana lost a giant of a man when Henry A. "Buster" Smith, Jr. passed away on Friday, September 9, 2011, at age 82 after a lengthy illness.

Born in St. Charles Parish and raised in an area outside of New Orleans known as the River Parishes, Mr. Henry, as we affectionately knew him, was a confident and self-made man who had an optimistic outlook on life that would lift you when you were in his presence. He, and others like him, helped build this Nation.

Mr. Henry was a product of the River Parishes whose people draw their strength and sustenance from the Mississippi River, and whose ingenuity and hard work built the incredible industrial complex along the river that fuels so much of our Nation's energy and commerce. He was the guiding force in the development of what became the Magnolia Companies, a multicompany conglomerate in the fields of construction, housing, material sales, real estate, finance, disaster recovery and consulting. He traveled the world in order to help people recover from disasters on six continents, but always returned home to Louisiana and his beloved River Parishes. Mr. Henry assisted with securing the futures for hundreds of families by creating opportunities for meaningful and rewarding work for them to pursue.

Mr. Henry was a champion for his community and the surrounding region. He supported numerous charities, churches and schools in and around the New Orleans area, including the Ursuline Academy, Sacred Heart Catholic Church, First Baptist Church of Norco, and the Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood Development Center. He was a leader who was sincere and steadfast in his drive to help others. He truly believed in the spirit and generosity of mankind and thought that everyone deserved a chance.

He was very passionate about politics and immersed himself in supporting candidates for local, State, and Federal office. I was fortunate enough to have Mr. Henry's support and counsel through my years in politics. Even though Mr. Henry was opinionated, he always said that no matter what, there

were two sides to every story. He was a Democrat but was always more interested in the merits of a debate rather than partisanship. He believed most of all in moving his community, State, and Nation in a positive direction. We could certainly use more people like Mr. Henry.

Above all else, Mr. Henry was devoted to his family his sons, Glen and his wife Marilyn and Gary and his wife Pam, along with his grandchildren, Representative Gary Smith, Jr. and his wife Katherine, Rebecca Smith Tassin and her husband Justin, and Madison Elizabeth Smith—just as they were to him and each other. The Smith family is one of the most loving families I have ever known. Mr. Henry worked joyfully with his two sons Glen and Gary every day for more than 40 years. Never have I seen two sons more devoted to their father.

Today I ask my colleagues to join me along with Mr. Henry's family in honoring and celebrating the life of this most extraordinary son of Louisiana.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAN FLOWERS

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the life and career of Dan Flowers, who is retiring as director of the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department after a lifetime of service and dedication to the State.

Dan Flowers began his career with the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department more than 40 years ago after spending his summers in college as an employee in the departments Resident Engineer Office in his hometown of Batesville. He held this position for 4 years until he graduated in 1969 from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. Enjoying his time with the department, Dan went on to complete the engineering orientation program and was assigned as a planning engineer in the Planning & Research Division. He has worked in a total of eight other engineering and management positions within the Department before being promoted to director in 1994.

Dan Flowers has had many achievements during his career as the director, and in announcing his retirement to his staff he was quick to point out the collaborative effort "we plan, we build, we maintain, and we manage—but the key word in all of that is WE."

Perhaps one of Dan's greatest accomplishments was the 1999 interstate repair program and one that he says was the most interesting. The 5-year, \$1 billion repair program overhauled the Arkansas interstate system which included 54 projects and more than 350 miles of interstate. Dan has truly helped make Arkansas roads safer and his work has touched countless lives.

Not only was he active in transportation on a regional level but also